Phonology: Let's start with allophones

○ **Phoneme**: Minimal distinctive unit in the sound system of a language, an abstract category. Distinctive = they allow speakers to distinguish between words (ex. [lʊk vs **b**ʊk]). We use slashes with phonemes //;

○ **Phone**: physical realisation of a phoneme. We use square brackets with phones [];

○ **Allophone**: a phone which is one of the possible realisations of a phoneme. Phonemes distinguish words, allophones don't. If we replace an allophone with another, we don't change the meaning of a word. So, only two different phonemes can help distinguish a **minimal pair** (words which differ only for one sound, but their meaning changes). If two words are a minimal pair, their distinguishing sound is a phoneme, not an allophone.

○ Caracteristics of allophones:

1. In <u>complementary distribution</u>, if they cannot replace one another because of the phonological context – one allophone can occur only when the other cannot: e.g. devoiced [ɹ̥] after voiceless consonants, as in [pɹ̥ɒn] and voiced [ɹ] sound in any other position. They're allophones of the phoneme /ɹ/. <u>Allophones in complementary distribution allow phonetician to predict their distribution, so they are useful for phonological rules</u>;

2. In <u>free variation</u>, if they can replace one another. E.g. released [p] and unreleased [p˺] can both occur in word-final contexts: <u>it depends on the speaker's choice</u>;

3. <u>The phonetic context determines which allophone of a phoneme appears in a word</u>. E.g. released [p] can occur in any phonetic context ([pen, əˈpɪə, stɒp]), while unreleased [p˺] can occur only in word-final position [stɒp˺]. Another example is **neutralisation**: a contrast between two phonemes is neutralised. This mainly happens through **final devoicing**: final voiced phonemes become voiceless, so the difference between them and their voiced corresponding phoneme is neutralised. E.g. buck [bʌk] and bug [bʌg], sometimes both pronounced [bʌk].